

## **KINGFISHES**

(06/07 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock Status - *Unknown*** – Commercial landings were slightly under their 10-year average but 89% higher than in 2005. The majority of the landings (73%) were from ocean sink nets. The ex-vessel value per pound increased 6% compared to 2005. Recreational fishery landings in 2006 were 23% below their 10-year average. The Pamlico Sound juvenile index was the highest on record.

**Average Commercial Landings and Value - 1997-2006** - 561,609 lbs./\$548,505

**2006 Commercial Landings and Value** - 559,448 lbs./\$550,574

**Average Recreational Landings 1997-2006** - 319,527 lbs., **2006** – 246,280 lbs.

**Average Number of Award Citations (1.5 lbs.) 1997-2006** – 197, **2006** - 208

**Status of Fishery Management Plan (FMP)** – The draft North Carolina FMP is available on the Division of Marine Fisheries's web site and will be finalized in late 2007.

**Research and Data Needs** - Studies to determine distribution and composition of the three kingfish species found in North Carolina, habitat utilization, migration studies (tagging), maturity (ongoing) and fecundity studies, age and growth studies (ongoing), and validate a juvenile abundance index.

**Current Regulations (2007)** - None

**Harvest Season** - year round

**Size and Age at maturity** – 7-9 inches/1 year

**Historical and Current Maximum Age** – 8 years

**Juvenile Abundance Index – 1997-2006** – Pamlico Sound Survey – 2.4, **2006** – 10.1

**Habits and Habitats** - Kingfishes are also known as sea mullet, Virginia mullet, whiting and roundhead include three species in North Carolina; southern, northern, and gulf. The southern kingfish is the most abundant of the three species and prefers mud or sand-mud bottom types like the northern kingfish. Gulf kingfish prefer the sandy bottoms of the surf zone. Kingfishes move from estuarine and nearshore ocean waters to deeper offshore waters as water temperature cools. Spawning takes place in the ocean from April to October.

For more information, see [DMF Species Leads page](#)